2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

take photographs of the picturesque, abandoned Shiah mosque. It has been superseded by the New Assembly Hall in cut granite with pointed roof—an amazing achievement for local architects and masons, and one of which they are justly proud, but a dreadful eyesore in these surroundings and as uninspiring to an artistic eye as a Methodist chapel in a London suburb. Unfortunately it jostles the picturesque old mosque (whose entrance flight of steps is a delightful notched tree-trunk and whose flat roof bristles with a parapet of ibex horns), so that you can only see the older building squint-eye up or down a 3-foot lane. We pushed on and found ourselves emerging on a bluff covered with handsome graves. The Hunzukuts are too necessarily frugal to bury their dead on any ground that can be cultivated, so their graves usually stand on some barren hump that rises above the reach of irrigation water. Ordinary graves are just covered by flat slabs of concrete-like beaten earth, but more important folk have picturesque erections of varied shape to mark their last resting place. In theory all should no doubt be oriented in relation to Mecca, but in fact the graves face in whichever direction the site makes most convenient. We skirted round God's acre, re-entering the unappetizing labyrinth of desolate lanes, and presently came on a debris-strewn patch of ground whose houses had been dismantled (probably for their timber), and had fallen in. Here old Ferrájo had made a lathe-pit outside a rather handsome wooden door with a carved lintel. This had once led to his family's "town house," but now they lived out in Jamu, a suburb, as it were, of Aliábád. In its day, the warren of buildings to which he proudly pointed had boasted fifty-two "smokes." (A smoke represents a hearth-fire, and a hearth represents a household. In enquiring of a hamlet how many families it shelters, the correct phrase is: "How many smokes have you here?")

We begged Ferrájo to let us see him at work. He had, however, no wood in hand at the moment; chunks of root or cross-sections of willow trunks are the raw material of his bowls. But he let us inspect his pit—very similar in size and shape to a loom-pit—with the treadles and a leather belt passing three

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

turn on," till you discover that it "diverts the flow of water" whether in one direction or another.

All technical terms, be they verbs or nouns, are capable of vivid metaphorical application, humorous and pointed when you are sufficiently *au courant* to appreciate the intended allusion. Such metaphorical uses are improvised as required with an originality and freshness that an American might envy.

A tiresome person may be "a wasps' nest" or "a painful disease," an over-strenuous worker "an earthquake," an only child "one torch-splinter," a loutish person "a pumpkin," an inexperienced fellow "a green apricot," a short-handled spoon "a tadpole," and so forth.

Clocks and watches are, of course, unknown where work is simply from dawn to dusk, yet the complicated exchanges of water at midnight or 3 a.m. are faultlessly concerted. Our day appointments would be defined "when the sun is one lance-length above the hill" or "when the first shadow falls on such and such a spot." Dádo had had experience of European time in some earlier service, and was thrilled to possess the watch that DL gave him. He used to come to the study every evening to set it by our little clock. He always held it upside down, and in order to compare it with ours (which was naturally right side up) he went through the oddest neck contortions to get his head upside down. But the idea of time had enslaved him; he was more rigorously and unforgivingly punctual than any servant we ever had, and it was impossible to bear the reproach in his eyes if we waited to wind up a paragraph after dinner was on the table. When I was typing in the dining-room he would appear at the door and say politely but firmly: "I must come to lay the table in another three minutes, Mother." Sometimes, just to tease him, I would say, "Well, you can't, for I'm going to finish this, and it will take at least ten minutes." "Oh, Mother *dear*, then dinner will be late!"

Burushaski has no expressions for East and West or North and South except the learned words of Arabic; Hunza thought runs "up river" and "down river," "uphill and downhill." One day in describing a house I said, "You know So and So's,

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

it is on the Dála." "No, no, it is on the Middle Channel." 192
For a moment I was puzzled, for the house, in fact, sat exactly [823]
on the upper bank of the Dála, but of course watered its fields and drew its water from the channel *above*: the essential fact to a Hunza mind.

Though their technical vocabulary is so exact, the Hunzukuts are only human, and occasionally like ourselves take refuge in "thingumabob," "what you may call it," and "bandobast." They have coined an invaluable word which for fun I wrote "Alice." I found it was quite in order to say: "We are nearly out of charcoal, tell Zaidu to do Alice," viz., to make the necessary arrangements for getting more, or "the Alices are coming, tell everyone to get the Alices," which would mean that the So and So's are coming, tell everyone to get ready whatever is necessary. I hoped to import "Alice" into my home-speech as maid of all work, but here she awakens thoughts of Wonderland and the Looking Glass and proves a plant too delicate to rear in another atmosphere.

The weather in Hunza also provides some entertaining idioms. It is natural to say "the rain is falling," but the Hunzukuts not illogically also say "the sun is falling", where we would say shining, and where we put a thing *in* the sun to dry he puts it *on* the sun, that is, on the patch of warm sunshine.

In the main, Burushaski is innocent of the elaborate cir- 195 •
cumlocutions of ceremonial speech in which Persian, for instance, is so rich. The humblest peasant addresses his King as "thou," but one foreign courtesy-word has crept in. One day I excused myself to the party of women amongst whom I was sitting by saying: "I must now go home. My husband will be ready to eat bread." "She has said 'my husband,'" they chuckled. "Well, isn't the Colonel Sahib my husband? What should I have said?" "You yourself should say 'my spouse' (*jama'at*) though we might say 'her husband.'"

After this I was careful in talking to man or woman, however humble, to enquire after the *jama'at* and not crudely after the wife or husband, and found that this was more acceptable. I

Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

195 noticed, too, that when I asked: "Are you well?" the return question would sometimes be couched in the ungrammatical form: "Are your name well?" but this was chiefly used by the children as more respectful. I was told it would be unsuitable for me at my age to use to anyone, even to the King. Otherwise in Hunza spades are spades.

114 DL's original vocabulary (vol. iii of the book already alluded to) comprises some 3,000–4,000 words. From our first day with the Hunzukuts to our last, we were recording new words without ceasing, or registering new meanings for words we thought we knew. Far from having "completed" a vocabulary of Hunza Burushaski after a hard year's work DL felt he was just beginning it. Ten years more could have been profitably spent on the task if we had had them to spend. At least no language enthusiast can complain that the field is bare; there are ample gleanings left for him or her. A rich harvest indeed awaits the reaper—but labourers to date are few.

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4: Lorimer L-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1935 AV7 Burusho AV7

115 hunting, polo — he did it with his might; manly, competent and fearless; a dynamic figure, not necessarily every man's friend. Since then he had visibly aged, but there was still about him something of the alert, dashing air of the born adventurer.

To return to the Texts: No. 4 was related by a then old man, 'Ali Madat of Baltit, who, I believe still survives, though perhaps no longer capable of repeating his effort of eleven years ago.[1] IYB's help was essential in recording this text.

Nazar of Aliabad supplied the version of the "Prodigal Son" given in No. 46 A. No. 47 was written out and sent to me by Gushpur Muhammad Ghani Khān, the son of the Mir by a local, non-royal wife. He also was a man of vigour and ability who died quite young of some illness, four or five years ago.

The Proverbs were furnished to me in writing by 'Ināyat Ullāh Bēg, the second of the three sons of Wazir Humayun.

The Werchikwār Texts No.s 1 and 2 were obtained by me in Yasin from Hidāyat Shāh of Thui, and the translation of the "Prodigal Son" from Bahādur Amān Shāh of Yasin. In recording these I had the valuable help of Mēhtarzhau Shāhzāda Yūsuf of Yasin.

538 [565] One point of interest may be noted with regard to the Burushaski Texts, especially those containing local narrative. I have found, on reading out bits of them at random to several people here of the upper class, firstly that they appear readily to follow my rendering of the Burushaski, and secondly that they can habitually continue the statement at any point in almost the same [195] words as the recorded text. This shows that, though there are no professional narrators in Hunza, with the possible, partial exception of Ali Madat, the ordinary people are in the habit of passing on tales and explanations of customs in a more or less [173] stereotyped form of expression. This is probably the relic of a former custom of the upper classes of spending the evening after

[1] I have, since writing this, sought him out, and found him decrepit, but cheerful. Public opinion denies him any large measure of sympathy, as "he is not really old and has a number of sons who support him in comfort".

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

people, who had practically the monopoly of the necessary birch. Our crossing into Hunza was therefore assured, and I received civil enough letters from the Thum repeating his invitations. His epistolary style was always quaint and high-flown, and on this occasion, when welcoming me, he compared my party to "camels without nose-ropes uncontrolled," meaning by this that we were free to wander at our pleasure in all directions. In a former letter he had, with reference to the difficulty of supplying our party, compared us to elephants. On a later occasion he incidentally remarked that he proposed to send my head on a charger as a present to the Government of India: but there was a good deal to come before that.

Crossing a mile above Chalt the rope bridge over the Hunza river, which seemed the longest and steepest we had yet crossed, though that over the Gilgit river had a span of three hundred and sixty feet, we found ourselves in Nagar territory, the first Europeans who had ever penetrated its mysterious wilds. The bridge was a new one, fortunately for us, for they are very unsafe when old, and should be renewed annually. This involves a good deal of labour, as nine cables of twisted birch twigs of the necessary length, in this case some four hundred and fifty feet, have to be prepared. The people therefore often put off the work and chance the bridge lasting, and I have seen bridges three and four years old in use. This is horribly dangerous; the birch twigs dry and perish, and the ropes break suddenly. As a rule they do not go all together, and I have seen a bridge in use con-